

Testimony of Mr. Nelson Ortiz before the Housing Committee in support of Bill # 1075 –
An Act concerning Public Housing Grievance Procedures

March 1, 2011

Hello, my name is Nelson Ortiz and I live in Valentino-Macri Apts at 109 Frank Street in New Haven, CT. I am a member of PHRN as well as a Resident Advisory Board member. I am here to speak on the importance of a grievance procedure for all residents in public housing, be they state or federal. I live in federal public housing and if it were not for our federally mandated grievance procedure along with my keeping good records and the support of PHRN New Haven Housing Authority would have been able to wrongfully evict me or make me pay back rent that I did not owe.

This may seem like an easy case to prove and win to a lot of you but if you do not have guidelines in place like a grievance procedure you run the risk of being subjected to whatever a housing authority chooses to do to you.

Residents in state public housing need the same kind of protection as we in federal public housing have. They need to know they are guaranteed the right to a day in court like the constitution guarantees everyone. They need to know they are not at the mercy of a housing authority's actions with no immediate recourse. That's what a grievance procedure gives them.

Thank you